Graphical Passwords for Use in a Data Processing Network

ABSTRACT

5

A method and system for authorizing access to networked information using a graphically based password. In one embodiment, access to a restricted document is granted only after the user has demonstrated its authority to access the information by identifying a previously determined sequence of graphical images. If the user identifies the correct images, the user is granted access to the restricted information. In one embodiment, the graphical images may be presented to the user as a sequence of web pages where each page has multiple graphical images (icons). On each page in the sequence, the user selects (such as by clicking) the correct icon. The icon may be implemented as a link to the next web page in the password sequence. As each page is presented, the user clicks the correct icon thereby generating a sequence of accessed web pages. The server then verifies the user as an authorized user by comparing the sequence of web pages visited by the user to a predetermined sequence. In this manner, the password enabling a user to access confidential information comprises a sequence of web pages visited by the user. The graphically based password information may be supplemented with user identification information that is either entered by the user or provided by the user as cookie information. In this embodiment, the server may grant various levels of access based on the combination of the user identification information and the graphically entered password.